

The Divine Love of Rāhāsā Dance

Hai Krishna...

Hari Krishnan Hari Krishnan Krishnah Krishnah Harih Harih
RadheeKrishnan RadheeKrishnan Krushna Krushna Hari Hari May your
spirit spread its wings! And fly freely as it should To accomplish your life
dreams! Jaya Govinda Hari Govinda.



"The Divine Love of Rahasa Dance"

Blessing of A.C. Bhaktivedatnta Swami Prabhupada.

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Rāhāṣā

By:-Avinash Patra

“With all his superhuman qualities and achievements, Sri Krishna never appeared distant to any of his fellow human beings. In fact he was dearer to them than their own nearest kith and kin. He was ideal in all his human relationships - a darling son to his parents, an endearing friend and comrade, a devoted disciple, a loving husband and a trusted brother. The shadow of his greatness never marred these bonds of the heart”.

The Definition of Rāhāṣā:-

One of Spiritual and Yogic Combination rounded Dance with Combine Lord Krishna and All of Gopies in Vrindavana and specially S.mt Radharani, when the relationship with Krishna increases in affection, the mood of fear and the consciousness of the superiority of the Supreme Lord diminish. Here the fraternal relationship manifests in a sense of equality between Krishna and His friends. When the affection of the fraternal relationship increases, it develops into the paternal relationship that is found between father and son. In other words, intimate relationships with Krishna develop from an ordinary conception of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; to the conception of master and

servant; and when this becomes confidential, it develops into a friendly relationship, and when the relationship further develops, it becomes paternal, and when this develops to the highest point of love and affection it is known as conjugal love and Spiritual Language called Rāhāsā Lila with the Supreme Lord.

There are five kinds of relationships with Krishna: Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya and Madhurya. Each Rāhāsā includes all the qualities of the preceding one, plus a distinguishing quality of its own.

Santa Rāhāsā:

Santa Rāhāsā is the neutral attitude of devotees who are in appreciation of the greatness of God, but are not actively engaged in His service. "Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur states that in Brajabhumi; the Yamuna River, the kadamba trees, the cows, Krishna's cow herding stick and flute all belong to the santa Rāhāsā (the mellow of neutrality or passive adoration)."

Dasya Rāhāsā:

In Dasya Rāhāsā there is freedom from all material attachments and doubts, and appreciation of the greatness of God. There is also active service in dasya Rāhāsā. This Rāhāsā may be mixed with other Rāhāsā. Citraka, Patraka and Raktaka are direct servants of Krishna. Those who are constantly engaged in the personal service of the Lord are called anugas, or followers.

Sakhya Rāhāsā:

In this Rāhāsā one feels that Krishna is my friend. The devotees relate with Krishna on equal terms and actually forget that Krishna is superior. The friends in Vrindavana are in such intimate friendship with Krishna that sometimes they think themselves as good as Krishna. "Krishna is their lovable friend, and they cannot forget Him for a moment. All day and all night they think of Krishna. At night when they are sleeping they think, 'Oh, in the morning I shall go and play with Krishna.' and in the morning they go to Krishna's house and stand by while Krishna is decorated by Mother Yasoda before going out with His friends to play in the fields."

Krishna's well-wishers are a little older than Krishna, and they have some parental affection for Him. Because of their being older than Krishna, they always try to protect Him from any harm.

The more confidential friends are called priya - sakhas and are almost Krishna's age. The behavior of other friends is on the ground of paternal love or servitude, but the basic principle of the confidential friends is simply friendship on an equal level.

Vatsalya Bhakti Rāhāsā:

Although Krishna was born to Devaki, Yasoda was looking after Krishna as if He was her own son and she was developing 'Vatsalya Bhakti' towards Krishna. In spite of the fact that several gopikas used to complain about Krishna, Yashoda loved him all the more and she never bothered about the complaints. This love towards Krishna forms Vatsalya relationship.

Madhurya Rāhāsā:

This form of Rāhāsā reflects sweetness, exquisite beauty; transcendental love of Godhead in the mode of conjugal love. Radharani is madhurya-mayi, full of sweetness. Therefore, those

who are followers or devotees of Madhurya-Rāhāsā can see the same manifestation of love which Radharani executed. Only such Madhurya-Rāhāsā bhaktas can see it; others cannot.

Lord Supreme Ascends in the Cosmos of Yogmaya for the Sports of Maha Rāhāsā



When the pain of separation in Brij reached a climax, the Lord left this
mundane world and went into the divine plane of Yogmaya.

*Ah baat dhani chit saun lyaye, Aadhi nind dai udai |
Agyare varas aur bavan din, ta pichhey pohunche Brindavan | |
(KS, Pra.Hi: 37/34).*

*Eah swaroop ne eah Vrindavana, eah Jamuna trat Saar |
Ghar thi teet, Brahmanda thi algo, teh Tartamey kidho nirdhar | |
(KS, Rāhāsā: 10/36)*

He (in the person of Krishna) played His divine flute to call His souls. The world underwent dissolution. The souls ascended to the divine plane of *Keval Brahmn* and prepared for the Rāhāsā Līla in Nitya Brindavan. A seeker soul may enjoy all the sports of Rāhāsā, which are vividly described in the Holy Kuljam Swaroop in the book of 'Rāhāsā.' The seeker soul should understand the distinction among the four categories of Rāhāsā discussed later, in this chapter.

Supreme Lord Withdraws His Powers from the Sports of Maha Rāhāsā. Theo's Demand Continued.

Submerged in the joy of Rāhāsā, both the souls and the Akshar Brahmn forgot their originality. To make Akshar Brahmn aware of the fact that He was enjoying Param Dham's sports of bliss, the Supreme Lord withdrew His power (or aavesh) from the person of Krishna.

*Pher mool sarupen dekhiya tit, eah Dou magan hueh khelat |
Jab josh liya kheinch kar, tab chit chaunk bhayee akshar | |
(KS, Pra.Hi: 37/41)*

This caused Akshar Brahmn to wake up in His original form and the Souls to wake up in their Supreme Meeting Place, called Mool Milava. Upon waking up in their Original Abode, the Souls claimed that they still had not experienced the Akshar Brahman's *maya* to their full satisfaction in Brij and Rāhāsā.

Vraj Rāhāsā "Lila Dou mahen, dukh taamasiyon dekhyā
nahen | (KS, Pra.Hi: 37/50)

When the Soul's demand continued, Shri Raj Ji said these last words: "Alasto-Be-Rub-Kum." In other words, "Oh my dear souls, please don't ever forget that I am your one and only one Lord. Always remember this in the spectacle of *maya*."

Responding to these words of our Lord, the souls reassured Him with one voice, "*valley*," which means "For sure, O our Lord! We will never ever forget our eternal relationship with you." After this, the Lord commanded Akshar Brahmn to initiate the present universe of Kalmaya

The Secret of Rāhāsā Lila: The Blissful Divine Sports.

What is the meaning of Rāhāsā? Is there more than one category of Rāhāsā? How are they related? Rāhāsā means the blissful divine sports of the Lord with His souls. Krishna, Radha, and Gopies are the three main characters of Rāhāsā Lila. As we discussed earlier, 'Ishak Rabad' (the Talk of Divine Love between Supreme Lord and His souls) is the root cause of the original sports of Maha Rāhāsā. One can learn about three other hierarchial categories of Rāhāsā Lila, all of which are direct or an indirect outcome of the Maha Rāhāsā Lila. They all are like mirror images of one original. The only difference is that the players in each of them represent different hierarchial spiritual origins. It's important for a seeker soul to have this concept clear in order for her to rise to the highest spiritual world, the Param Dham, in the state of supreme bliss - Nijanand.

Many great devotees of Lord Krishna, and the three godheads - Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh sought to experience these blissful divine sports in the universe of Yogmaya. No scripture of the world, other than Srimad Bhagavatam, has been able to explain a small drop of the Rāhāsā Lila. The Rāhāsā Lila described in Srimad Bhagavatam is called Vyavhariki Rāhāsā, which was played between Gauloki Lord and Ved Ruchas.

The four categories of Rāhāsā

The four categories of Rāhāsā are explained as follows:

Vastavik Rāhāsā Lila:

Also known as Maha Rāhāsā. Played in the Yogmaya, specifically in the intellectual (Buddhi) domain of Akshar Brahmn - Keval Brahmn. These were the players in this Rāhāsā Lila: Aksharateet Shri Raj Ji (with Akshar's soul) as Krishna, Shyama Ji (with Akshar's soul) as Radha and Brahmn Srishti Souls (with the soul of Akshar Brahmn) as Gopies.

Pratibhasiki Rāhāsā Lila:

After Maha Rāhāsā, when Brahmā Srishti souls requested Shri Raji to take them to the abode where there is no separation at all, Raji, Shyama Ji and Brahmā Srishti souls returned to Param Dham. Nevertheless, the soul of Akshar Brahmā playing with them in the sports of Maha Rāhāsā, remembered it and this was permanently stored in the domain of Akshar Brahmā's Chit--Sablik Brahmā.

Pratibimb Rāhāsā Lila:

The Maha Rāhāsā Lila's reflection also falls upon the domain of mind of Akshar Brahmā--the Avyakrit Brahmā.

This way, Akshar Brahmā's three inner senses--mind (manas), faculties of cognition (chit), and intellect (Buddhi)--are all experiencing the blissful sports of Maha Rāhāsā.

Vyavahariki Rāhāsā Lila:

When the Ved Ruchas in the domain of Avyakrit Brahmā saw the Pratibimb Rāhāsā Lila (reflection of the Maha Rāhāsā Lila), they demanded to experience and play similar sports of Rāhāsā from their Gauloki Lord. Gauloki Lord agreed to satisfy their request and told them that when he will go to Mrityu Loka (this world), he will be able to replay the similar sports of Rāhāsā.

How is the Rāhāsā Lila linked to the present world?

In the present universe in which we live today, the Gauloki Lord played the role of Krishna and Ved Ruchas played the role of Gopies. This way, the *Vyavahariki Rāhāsā* Lila was accomplished in the Brindavan (near Delhi, India) of this world. It should be noted here that as opposed to the previous Rāhāsā Lilas, this *Vyavahariki Rāhāsā* Lila is finished and is not eternal.

It may be recalled here that when the Supreme Lord Shri Raj Ji, Shyama Ji, and Souls left Brij for the Maha Rāhāsā Lila in Yogmaya, the universe underwent dissolution (Pralaya). This present universe is the new and the exact copy of the previous one, and has been put into continuation from where it was ended. After this *Vyavahariki Rāhāsā* Lila, Krishna left Gokul Brindavan for Mathura. As a result, Ved Ruchas experienced a great pain in separation. Uddhav, a devotee of Krishna, tried to preach his wisdom to these Ved Ruchas, which they rejected upfront. Because, they knew that the Gauloki Lord had already departed from the person of Krishna. This Gauloki power had left for its original abode, Gaulok. They knew that only the powers of Lord Vishnu had remained in the person of Krishna.

Again, one should take a note here that the Rāhāsā Lila, which Srimad Bhagavatam talks about, is the *Vyavahariki Rāhāsā* played between Gauloki Lord and Ved Ruchas. This complete secret of the Supreme Lord's Rāhāsā Lila could not have been understood without Aksharateet Supreme Lord's divine grace.

Today, more than five thousand years have passed since the Vyavahariki Rāhāsā Lila. After that, many great seers and prophets descended on this earth. They brought different messages through their respective scriptures to awaken the Brahmn Srishti Souls. Among non-Hindus, prophets such as Moses, David, Isha and Muhammad came. Scriptures such as Torah, Bible and Koran descended through them. Later, Saint Kabir and Guru Nanak Dev came in India with a great deal of wisdom. This way, the worldly stage was fully prepared with all possible testimonies to awaken the Brahmn Srishti Souls.

Śrī rādha ---

Is a **maha bhava** - 'an ecstatic concept about an exquisite beauty...' and she is the cynosure of this mini-epic gita govindam or Gita Govindam of Jayadeva. This work Gita Govindam is a lyrical dance-drama, plussed with the then romantics, poetic aesthetics and what not with a theme of vipralambha srīngara - anguish in separation and joy in uniting of divine couple **rādha** and Krishna. The poet sings to the joy of Krishna, wishing him to be always joyous togetherness of rādha, addressing him variously like Govinda, Maadhava, Hari, Keshava etc., according to the situation, and hence it is called Gita Govindam, like bhaja govindam i.e., devout yourself unto Govinda. For easy comprehension we have put all the names as Krishna. And rādha is none else than Krishna, the very fount of his **Lila sakti** creative power. She transmutes his glory into **prema ananda**, the zenith of blissful happiness, in which alone he takes pleasure. This is the idea of gita govindam.

That being the viewpoint of Absolute Theology, taking hold of Applied Theology our poet Jayadeva brings rādha a little closer to our nature, under the ozone sphere within this Earthly Nature that which is also crafted by that God for our habitation, to depict her romance with Krishna to our view point. Hence, **rādha** can be construed as Queen Nature, in a way of interpretation of this mini-epic.

And that Queen Nature always longs for her togetherness with that God as she knows none else. But that God, as a knight of cosmic-roads, will never stay put with her for a long time, and if the league together, there will be frolicking and merrymaking to the nth, because she is his **hlaadini Shakti**, where **Shakti** does not translate here as power as in tantric parlance, but it means primary agent - primary source of god's delightment. What more is required to have unseen God with seeable Mother, or Queen, or whatever- Nature. Is it not Holy?

The dancing, singing, frolicking and merrymaking of Krishna with this type of unique milkmaids is **Rāhāsā Lila**, **Rāhāsā kriDa**. This dancing in a circle, a rounded dance as we call it, in itself is a particular dance, by the singing of many milkmaids to the fluting of one Krishna. This happens only in **Brindavan**, all- holy woodland with thickets of basil plants, conceived only for the congregation of such milkmaids for their communion with Krishna.

'As heat is to fire, as cold is to ice, as sweetness to honey so are god's qualities to himself, so is rādha to Krishna. **Rādha**, or **rādhika**, is Krishna's power brought into play so that he may have a partner in his game, who may super sensuously share his love. Her love is the highest possible, and it is when identified with her as the Supreme Lover of God that the soul attains perfection. 'Just as Krishna is essentially god and beyond Nature, so too is rādha essentially god, immaculate...' **naarada pancaraatra**. She is the power by which god

creates, herself remaining beyond what he creates through her. She remains ever immaculate even while manifesting through Nature's three 'modes' **sattva**, **rajo**, **tamo**, **gunNa**-s, or subtle elements; she cannot be bound by the laws of their interaction, for she is the source of their activity the Gospel of Narada.

On an autumnal full moon night, the gopi-s or gopikas-s, or milkmaids, attracted by the flute of Krishna, went out of their homes and met him in the groves of Brindavan. He first tried to send them back, but failed. Then the **raasa** began on the beach of Yamuna, and when the **gopikas**-s were beside themselves with ecstasy, Krishna suddenly disappeared from the scene. When they came to know of this, their sorrow knew no bounds. They searched for him in every grove, bewailing all the while. When they came back... he suddenly reappeared in their midst. The dance was resumed... they roamed...played... bathed in Yamuna waters... The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. 4, the Religions the Ramakrishna Mission.

Gopikas-s or the milkmaids in Brindavan are not mere girlish milkmaids, but they are all saints and sages in their earlier incarnation, or the Veda-s themselves, so says the tradition. And Krishna according to his proximity to each one, wants to satisfy every soul. On such an occasion of **Rāhāsā Lila** or **Rāhāsā kriDa** Krishna had to deviate from **rādha** in this rounded dance, in order to satisfy others. Rādha's femininity spews fire at Krishna. These are the opening episodes of this drama, and we have to follow through it, rather giving a trailer of it.

This **Rāhāsā Lila Rāhāsā kriDa**-s are not just lustful erotic dances, but they have esoteric meaning. We are trying to include esoteric meaning of this rounded dance in appropriate episode, and we are gathering some info about it. All dancing, singing and frolicking of a devotee for a perfect communion with her devoted being, as said by:

In spite of the many kinds of love, which in Greek are designated as **aphelia** (friendship), Eros (aspiration toward value), and **epithymia** (desire), in addition to agape, (Theo. Christian love, esp. as distinct from erotic love,) which is the creation of the Spirit, there is one point of identity in all these qualities of love, which justifies the translation of them all by "love"; and that identity is the 'urge toward the reunion of these parated,' which is the inner dynamics of life. Love in this sense is one and indivisible." Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, vol.3, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 137.

The problem of **rādha** is almost that of St. Theresa 'for whom ecstasy is betrothal leading up to the spiritual marriage 'in which the soul always remains in its center with God...' The Interior Castle, Seventh Mansion, Ch. II sec.2 4., via S. Rādha Krishnan's Eastern Religions and Western Thought.

Here also, the poet portrays that spiritually betrothal of **rādha** with Krishna in this work. And what lust can be attached to a devotee, if he/she sings this Psalm: 'sing unto the Lord a new song: sing praises lustily unto him with a good courage...' Psalm 33, v. 3.

If any peripherally casual reader would like to deride or despise such philosophisation of apparently erotic expressions, they are requested to firstly read articles of Christian ethnologists on **rādha**, like Hon'ble David C. Scott, and Adam Clarke et al, whose rules are given at the end of this page.

When there are scores of websites on Jayadeva and his life, it will be unbecoming for this page to re-narrate the same. However, we may dare say that none has given any word forward translation for this work, nor for the complete translation of Gita Govinda, excepting that someone's attempt halted at the song on the eulogy of ten incarnations. There can be no exact translation of this work in any language, including the regional languages of India, because of the word smithy of this poet. This is as observed by Prof. T.Kotesvara Rao, Reader, and SKD University. He cites, for example, one letter running into the next word, to give a

completely different meaning like: **vasante vaasantii** - VA, vaa; **kusuma, sukumaaraiH** - su, ku; **baadhaam, rādhaam** - AA, dhaa. The other main feature of Jayadeva is wordplay. Very small words with cadence, pause, tempo etc., as in **lalita** - **lavanga** - **lataa** - **parishiilana** - only a letter with extended play. This is art of Jayadeva and there are many such examples to cite.

Translations or translations: Because jay deva's way of writing is so well-knit, it does not mean that others should not translate in regional languages or foreign ones, so says the above professor. But they remain a photocopy with many toner patches. We cannot possibly attain that delicacy or word arrangement in our languages. Hence, if we are translating, or calling them translations, they may please be viewed as 'communicating poet' side as through other tongue with many redundant words...' and hence we may be doing translations.

There are five gurus of Jayadeva peeping into this Gita Govinda, namely 1] **Valmiki** for designing the work, melodrama, anguish in separation of lead characters. Ramayana is in 24,000 verses and this work is in 12 chapters. Half of that number 24. But the **STa padi**-s, eight-footed songs are in 24 numbers. Next 2] **Bharata Muni** - for dance drama. 3] **Vaastaayana** - for romance. 4] **Kalidasa** - for word selection, brevity, small words with big meanings, alliterations etc. 5] **Jayadeva** on his own, as a trendsetter to language, grammar, poetic aesthetics etc.

Divine Love of Rāhāsā Lila:-



A prayer for the new dawn oh hidden light of million lights, Oh life of all life, may thine splendour enlightens every human spirit of life.

Oh hidden hue of love, may thou embrace humanity in altruism of divine love.

*Oh hidden delight of everlasting time, May each who feels elated
As one with thee in time, be also a light of hope to every other.*

Oh Divine Beauty of the dawn and the dusk, may the pathless trail be beautiful. Deep in my heart, a wish is made to the new dawn: Sunwards may we awake, to the sound of Gods, Oh divine morning, bright wings, bring freshness! May each dawn bring us new light of hope!

Hari Krishnan:

*The world is rarely meek and mild.
'Well Wishing' with a divine intention,
Form my hearts delight, hear oh dear:
May Great Spirit of all life nurture
Your spirit of life always as the flute
Of Krishnan becomes the music of
Your heart's melody. May your bhakti
Rejoice in the divine song
Of Krishnan:*

*Hari Krishnan Hari Krishnan Krishnah Krishnah Harih Harih
Radhee Krishnan Radhee Krishnan Krushna Krushna Hari Hari
May your spirit spread its wings!
And fly freely as it should
To accomplish your life dreams!
Jaya_Govinda_Hari_Govinda.*

From Pollution to Purity in Rāhāsā

The word "mysticism" comes from a Greek word, *mysterion*, which means "secret ceremony", says Avinash [me], "The people who have touched the Unknowable gather together to share. The sharing is not verbal; it cannot be Verbal. The sharing is of their being; they pour their being into each other. They Dance together, they sing together, they look into each other's eyes, or they simply sit Silently together. That's what was being done with Buddha, with Krishna, with Jesus,

In different ways.

"The lovers of Krishna were dancing with him. That was a *mysterion*, a secret Ceremony. If you look from the outside at what is happening you will not be able to Know what the case is really. Unless you become a participant, unless you dance with Krishna, you will not know what is being shared, because that which is being shared is invisible. It is not a commodity; it cannot be transferred from one hand to another; you will not see anything happening like that. It is not objective. It is the flowing of

One being into another, flowing of the presence of the Master into the disciple.

"These kinds of secret ceremonies in India have been called *raas*; in the tradition of Krishna they are called *raas*. *Raas* means dancing with the Master, so that your Energy is flowing and the Master's energy is flowing. And only flowing energies can Have a meeting. Stagnant pools cannot meet, only rivers can meet. It is only through Movement that meeting is possible," says Avinash [me] in my book "The Sankhya Darshan".

As it was in Vrindavana. The objects of love have Changed but the source of love remains the same. So Whosoever comes near him receives the gift. And this Gift is unconditional: nothing is required as a return, Nothing is asked as a return.

When love comes through an aware consciousness it is just a pure gift with no condition, and the person who is giving it is happy because he is giving it. The very act of giving is his bliss, his ecstasy," says Avinash[me] in "The Sankhya Darshan".

"Down the centuries, pilgrims have been going to Vrindavana to experience the ecstasy, the ambience, the Environment and vibrations of Lord Krishna. On the banks of the river lies the ancient city Vrindavana a city where the Gods once lived. This is the sacred place where thousands of Krishna devotees from all over the world come in search of the legends of Krishna and themselves on its 5,000 red sandstone temples. It is part of man's eternal search for himself,.

The Rāhāsā Dance:



In *Srēmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that the *Rāhāsā* dance took place on the Full-moon night of the *sarat* season. From the statements of previous chapters, it appears that the festival of Govardhana-pūjā was performed just after the dark-moon night of the month of Kārttika, and thereafter the ceremony of Bhrātā-dvitēyā was performed; then the wrath of Indra was exhibited in the shape of torrents of rain and hailstones, and Lord Kāñēa held up Govardhana Hill for seven days, until the ninth day of the moon. Thereafter, on the tenth day, the inhabitants of Vāndāvana were talking amongst themselves about the wonderful activities of Kāñēa, and the next day, Ekādaṣē was observed by Nanda Mahārāja. On the next day, Dvādaṣē, Nanda Mahārāja went to take a bath in the Ganges and was arrested by the men of

Varuëa; then he was released by Lord Kãñëa. Then Nanda Mahäräja, along with the cowherd men, was shown the spiritual sky.

In this way, the full-moon night of the *çarat* season came to an end. The full-moon night of Ä Svina is called *sarat-pürëimä*. It appears from the statements of *Srémad-Bhägavatam* that Kãñëa had to wait another year for such a moon before enjoying the *Rähäsä* dance with the *gopés*. At the age of seven years He lifted Govardhana Hill. Therefore the *Rähäsä* dance took place during His eighth year.

From the Vedic literature it appears that when a theatrical actor dances among many dancing girls, the group dance is called a *Rähäsä* dance. When Kãñëa saw the full-moon night of the *Sarat* season, decorated with various seasonal flowers—especially the *mallikä* flowers, which are very fragrant—He remembered the *gopés*' prayers to goddess Kätüäyané, wherein they prayed for Kãñëa to be their husband. He thought that the full-moon night of the *Sarat* season was just suitable for a nice dance. So their desire to have Kãñëa as their husband would then be fulfilled.

The words used in this connection in *Srémad-Bhägavatam* are *bhagavän API*. This means that although Kãñëa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus has no desire that needs to be fulfilled (because He is always full with six opulence's), He still wanted to enjoy the company of the *gopés* in the *Rähäsä* dance. *Bhagavän api* signifies that this is not like the ordinary dancing of young boys and young girls. The specific words used in *Srimad Bhagavatam* are *Yogmaya upäçritau*, which mean that this dancing with the *gopés* is on the platform of *yogamäyä*, not *mahämäyä*. The dancing of young boys and girls within the material world is in the kingdom of *mahämäyä*, or the external energy. The *Rähäsä* dance of Kãñëa with the *gopés* is on the platform of *yogamäyä*. The difference between the platforms of *yogamäyä* and *mahämäyä* is compared in the *Caitanya-caritämäta* to the difference between gold and iron. From the viewpoint of metallurgy, gold and iron are both metals, but the quality is completely different. Similarly, although the *Rähäsä* dance and Lord Kãñëa's association with the *gopés* appear like the ordinary mixing of young boys and girls, the quality is completely different. The difference is appreciated by great Vaiñëavas because they can understand the difference between love of Kãñëa and lust.

On the *mahämäyä* platform, dances take place on the basis of sense gratification. But when Kãñëa called the *gopés* by sounding His flute, the *gopés* very hurriedly rushed towards the spot of the *Rähäsä* dance with the transcendental desire to satisfy Kãñëa. The author of *Caitanya-caritämäta*, Kãñëädäsa Kaviräja Gosvämé, has explained that lust means sense gratification, and love also means sense gratification—but for Kãñëa. In other words, when activities are enacted on the platform of personal sense gratification, they are called material activities, but when they are enacted for the satisfaction of Kãñëa, then they are spiritual activities. On any platform of activities, the principle of sense gratification is there. But on the spiritual platform, sense gratification is for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kãñëa, whereas on the material platform it is for the performer. For example, on the material platform, when a servant serves a master, he is not trying to satisfy the senses of the master but rather his own senses. The servant would not serve the master if the payment stopped. That means that the servant engages himself in the service of the master just to satisfy his senses. On the spiritual platform, however, the servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead serves Kãñëa without payment, and he continues his service in all conditions. That is the difference between Kãñëa consciousness and material consciousness.

It appears that Kāñṇēa enjoyed the *Rāhāsā* dance with the *gopés* when He was eight years old. At that time, many of the *gopés* were married, because in India, especially in those days, girls were married at a very early age. There are even many instances of a girl's giving birth to a child at the age of twelve. Under the circumstances, all the *gopés* who wanted to have Kāñṇēa as their husband were already married. At the same time, they continued to hope that Kāñṇēa would be their husband. Their attitude toward Kāñṇēa was that of paramour love. Therefore, the loving affairs of Kāñṇēa with the *gopés* are called *parakéya-rasa*. The attitude of a married man who desires another wife or a wife who desires another husband is called *parakéya rasa*.

Actually, Kāñṇēa is the husband of everyone because He is the supreme enjoyer. The *gopés* wanted Kāñṇēa to be their husband, but factually there was no possibility of His marrying all the *gopés*. But because they had that natural tendency to accept Kāñṇēa as their supreme husband, the relationship between the *gopés* and Kāñṇēa is called *parakéya-rasa*. This *parakéya-rasa* is ever-existent in Goloka Vāndāvana in the spiritual sky, where there is no possibility of the inebriety which characterizes *parakéya-rasa* in the material world. In the material world, *parakéya-rasa* is abominable, whereas in the spiritual world it is present in the superexcellent relationship of Kāñṇēa and the *gopés*. There are many other relationships with Kāñṇēa: master and servant, friend and friend, parent and son, and lover and beloved. Out of all these *rasas*, the *parakéya-rasa* is considered to be the topmost.

This material world is the perverted reflection of the spiritual world; it is just like the reflection of a tree on the bank of a reservoir of water: the topmost part of the tree is seen as the lowest part. Similarly, *parakéya Rāhāsā*, when perversely reflected in this material world, is most abominable. When people, therefore, imitate the *Rāhāsā* dance of Kāñṇēa with the *gopés*, they simply enjoy the perverted, abominable reflection of the transcendental *parakéya-rasa*. There is no possibility of enjoying this transcendental *parakéya-rasa* within the material world. It is stated in *Srēmad-Bhāgavatam* that one should not imitate this *parakéya-rasa* even in dream or imagination. Those who do so drink the most deadly poison.

When Kāñṇēa, the supreme enjoyer, desired to enjoy the company of the *gopés* on that full-moon night of the Season, exactly at that very moment, the moon, the lord of the stars, appeared in the sky, displaying its most beautiful features. The full-moon night of the *çarat* season is the most beautiful night in the year. In the Indian city of Agra, in the Uttar Pradesh province, there is a great monument called the Taj Mahal, which is a tomb, made of first-class marble stone. During the night of the full moon of the *çarat* season, many foreigners go to see the beautiful reflections of the moon on the tomb. Thus this full-moon night is celebrated even today for its beauty.

When the full moon rose in the east, it tinged everything with a reddish color. With the rising of the moon, the whole sky appeared smeared by red *kuikuma*. When a husband long separated from his wife returns home, he decorates the face of his wife with red *kuikuma*. This long expected moonrise of the *çarat* season was thus smearing the eastern sky.

The appearance of the moon increased Kāñṇēa's desire to dance with the *gopés*. The forests were filled with fragrant flowers. The atmosphere was cooling and festive. When Lord Kāñṇēa began to blow His flute, the *gopés* all over Vāndāvana became enchanted. Their attraction to the vibration of the flute increased a thousand times due to the rising full moon, the red horizon, the calm and cool atmosphere and the blossoming flowers. All these *gopés* were by

nature very much attracted to Kāñḍā's beauty, and when they heard the vibration of His flute, they became apparently lustful to satisfy the senses of Kāñḍā.

Immediately upon hearing the vibration of the flute, they all left their respective engagements and proceeded to the spot where Kāñḍā was standing. While they ran very swiftly, all their earrings swung back and forth. They all rushed toward the place known as Vaṇḍévaṇḍā. Some of them were engaged in milking cows, but they left their milking business half-finished and immediately went to Kāñḍā. One of them had just collected milk and put it in a milk pan on the stove to boil, but she did not care whether the milk over boiled and spilled—she immediately left to go see Kāñḍā. Some of them were breast-feeding their small babies, and some were engaged in distributing food to the members of their families, but they left all such engagements and immediately rushed towards the spot where Kāñḍā was playing His flute. Some were engaged in serving their husbands, and some were themselves engaged in eating, but caring neither to serve their husbands nor eat, they immediately left. Some of them wanted to decorate their faces with cosmetic ointments and to dress themselves very nicely before going to Kāñḍā, but unfortunately they could not finish their cosmetic decorations or put on their clothes in the right way because of their anxiety to meet Kāñḍā immediately. Their faces were decorated hurriedly and were haphazardly finished; some even put the lower part of their clothes on the upper part of their bodies and the upper part on the lower part.

While all the *gopés* were hurriedly leaving their respective places, their husbands, brothers and fathers were all struck with wonder to know where they were going. Being young girls, they were protected either by husbands, elder brothers or fathers. All their guardians forbade them to go to Kāñḍā, but they disregarded them. When a person becomes attracted by Kāñḍā and is in full Kāñḍā consciousness, he does not care for any worldly duties, even though very urgent. Kāñḍā consciousness is so powerful that it gives everyone relief from all material activities. Çréla Rūpa Gosvāmé has written a very nice verse wherein one *gopé* advises another, “My dear friend, if you desire to enjoy the company of material society, friendship and love, then please do not go to see this smiling boy Govinda, who is standing on the bank of the Yamunā and playing His flute, His lips brightened by the beams of the full moonlight.” Çréla Rūpa Gosvāmé indirectly instructs that one who has been captivated by the beautiful smiling face of Kāñḍā has lost all attraction for material enjoyments. This is the test of advancement in Kāñḍā consciousness: a person advancing in Kāñḍā consciousness must lose interest in material activities and personal sense gratification.

Some of the *gopés* were factually detained from going to Kāñḍā by their husbands and were locked up by force within their rooms. Being unable to go to Kāñḍā, they began to meditate upon His transcendental form by closing their eyes. They already had the form of Kāñḍā within their minds. They proved to be the greatest *yogés*; as is stated in the *Bhagavadgétā*, a person who is constantly thinking of Kāñḍā within his heart with faith and love is considered to be the topmost of all *yogés*. Actually, a *yogé* concentrates his mind on the form of Lord Viñḍu. That is real *yoga*. Kāñḍā is the original form of all *viñḍu-tattvas*. The *gopés* could not go to Kāñḍā personally, so they began to meditate on Him as perfect *yogés*.

In the conditioned stage of the living entities, there are two kinds of results of furtive activities: the conditioned living entity who is constantly engaged in sinful activities has suffering as his result, and he who is engaged in pious activities has material enjoyment as a result. In either case—material suffering or material enjoyment—the enjoyer or sufferer is conditioned by material nature

The *gopé* associates of Kāññēa who assembled in the place where Kāññēa was appearing were from different groups. Most of the *gopés* were eternal companions of Kāññēa. As stated in the *Brahma-saṅhitā, ānanda-cinmaya- rasa-pratibhāvitābhīḥ*: in the spiritual world the associates of Kāññēa, especially the *gopés*, are manifestations of the pleasure potency of Lord Kāññēa. They are expansions of Çrématé Rādhārāṣī. But when Kāññēa exhibits His transcendental pastimes within the material world in some of the universes, not only the eternal associates of Kāññēa come but also those who are being promoted to that status from this material world. The *gopés* who joined Kāññēa's pastimes within this material world were coming from the status of ordinary human beings. If they had been bound by furtive action, they were fully freed from the reaction of *karma* by constant meditation on Kāññēa. Their severely painful yearnings caused by their not being able to see Kāññēa freed them from all sinful reactions, and their ecstasy of transcendental love for Kāññēa in His absence ended all their reactions to material pious activities. The conditioned soul is subjected to birth and death, either by pious or sinful activities, but the *gopés* who began to meditate on Kāññēa transcended both positions and became purified and thus elevated to the status of the *gopés* already expanded by His pleasure potency. All the *gopés* who concentrated their minds on Kāññēa in the spirit of paramour love became fully purified of all the furtive reactions of material nature, and some of them immediately gave up their material bodies developed under the three modes of material nature.

Mahārāja Parékñīt heard Sukadeva Gosvāmé explain the situation of the *gopés* who assembled with Kāññēa in the *Rāhāsā* dance. When he heard that some of the *gopés*, simply by concentrating on Kāññēa as their paramour, became freed from all contamination of material birth and death, he said, “The *gopés* did not know that Kāññēa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They accepted Him as a beautiful boy and considered Him to be their paramour. So how was it possible for them to get freed from the material condition just by thinking of a paramour?” One should consider here that Kāññēa and ordinary living beings are qualitatively one. The ordinary living beings, being part and parcel of Kāññēa, are also Brahman, but Kāññēa is the Supreme—Para Brahman. The question is, If it is possible for a devotee to get free from the material, contaminated stage simply by thinking of Kāññēa, then why not others who are also thinking of someone? If one is thinking of a husband or son, or if anyone at all is thinking of another living entity, then, since all living entities are also Brahman, why are all those who thus think of others not freed from the contaminated stage of material nature? This is a very intelligent question, because there are always atheists imitating Kāññēa. In these days of Kali-yuga, there are many rascals who think themselves to be as good as Kāññēa and who cheat people into believing that thinking of them is as good as thinking of Lord Kāññēa. Parékñīt Mahārāja, apprehending the future dangerous condition of blind followers of demoniac imitators, therefore asked this question, and fortunately it is recorded in *Çrémad- Bhāgavatam* to warn innocent people that thinking of an ordinary man and thinking of Kāññēa are not the same.

Actually, even thinking of the demigods cannot compare to thinking of Kāññēa. It is also warned in the *vaiñēava-tantra* that one who puts Viñēu, Nārāyaṇa or Kāññēa on the same level as the demigods is called a *pāñāḍōé*, or rascal. On hearing this question from Mahārāja Parékñīt, Sukadeva Gosvāmé replied, “My dear King, your question is already answered, even before this incident.” Because Parékñīt Mahārāja wanted to clear up the situation, his spiritual master answered him very intelligently, “Why are you again asking about the same subject matter which has already been explained to you? Why are you so forgetful?” A spiritual master is always in the superior position, so he has the right to chastise his disciple

in this way. Sukadeva Gosvāmé knew that Mahārāja Parékñit asked the question not for his own understanding but as a warning to the future innocent people who might think others to be equal to Kāñëa.

Sukadeva Gosvāmé then reminded Parékñit Mahārāja about the salvation of Sisupāla. Sisupāla was always envious of Kāñëa, and because of his envy Kāñëa killed him. But since Kāñëa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sisupāla gained salvation simply by seeing Him. If an envious person can get salvation simply by concentrating his mind on Kāñëa, Then what to speak of the *gopés*, who are so dear to Kāñëa and always, think of Him in love? There must be some difference between the enemies and the friends. If Kāñëa's enemies could get freed from material contamination and become one with the Supreme, then Certainly His dear friends like the *gopés* can achieve such freedom and much more.

Besides that, in the *Bhagavad-gétä* Kāñëa is called Hrsikesa. Sukadeva Gosvāmé also said that Kāñëa is Hrsikesa, the Super soul. Whereas an ordinary man is a conditioned soul covered by the material body, Kāñëa and Kāñëa's body are the same because He is Hrsikesa. Any person making a distinction between Kāñëa and Kāñëa's body is fool number one. Kāñëa is Hrsikesa and Adhoksaja. These two particular words have been used by Sukadeva Gosvāmé in this instance. Hrsikesa is the Super soul, and Adhoksaja is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, transcendental to the material nature. Just to show favor to the ordinary living entities, out of His causeless mercy He appears as He is. Unfortunately, foolish persons mistake Him to be an ordinary person, and so they become eligible to go to hell.

Sukadeva Gosvāmé continued to inform Mahārāja Parékñit that Kāñëa is not an ordinary person but rather the Supreme Personality of Godhead—imperishable, immeasurable, without any material qualities but full of all spiritual qualities. He appears in this material world out of His causeless mercy, and whenever He appears, He appears as He is, without change. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gétä*, where the Lord says that He appears by His spiritual potency. He does not appear under the control of this material potency. The material potency is under His control. In the *Bhagavad-gétä* it is stated that the material potency is working under His superintendence. It is also confirmed in the *Brahmasaàhitä* that the material potency, known as Durgä, is acting just as a shadow which moves with the movement of the substance. The conclusion is that if one somehow or other becomes attached to Kāñëa or Attracted to Him, either because of His qualities of beauty, opulence, fame, strength, renunciation or knowledge, through affection or friendship, or even through lust, anger or fear, then one's salvation and freedom from material contamination are assured.

In the *Bhagavad-gétä*, Eighteenth Chapter, the Lord states that one who is engaged in preaching Kāñëa consciousness is very dear to Him. A preacher has to face many difficulties in his struggle to preach pure Kāñëa consciousness. Sometimes he has to suffer bodily injuries, and sometimes he has to meet death also. All this is taken as a great austerity on behalf of Kāñëa. Kāñëa therefore has said that such a preacher is very, very dear to Him. If Kāñëa's enemies can expect salvation simply by concentrating their minds on Him, then what to speak of persons who are so dear to Kāñëa? The conclusion should be that the salvation of those who are engaged in preaching Kāñëa consciousness in the world is Guaranteed in all circumstances. But such preachers never care for salvation, because factually one who is engaged in Kāñëa consciousness, devotional service, has already achieved salvation. Sukadeva Gosvāmé therefore assured King Parékñit that he should

always rest assured that one attracted by Kāññēa attains liberation from material bondage because Kāññēa is the transcendental master of all mystic power.

When all the *gopés* assembled, as described, before Kāññēa, He began to speak to them, welcoming them as well as discouraging them by word jugglery. Kāññēa is the supreme speaker; He is the speaker of the *Bhagavad-gétā*. He can speak on the highest elevated subjects of philosophy, politics, economics—everything. And He also spoke before the *gopés*, who were so dear to Him. He wanted to enchant them by word jugglery, and thus He began to speak as follows.

“O ladies of Vāñdāvana,” Kāññēa said, “you are very fortunate, and you are very dear to Me. I am very pleased that you have come here, and I hope everything is well in Vāñdāvana. Now please order me. What can I do for you? What is the purpose of your coming here in the dead of night? Kindly take your seats and let me know what I can do for you.”

The *gopés* had come to Kāññēa to enjoy His Company, to dance with Him, embrace Him and kiss Him, and when Kāññēa began to receive them very officially, showing all kinds of etiquette, they were surprised. He was treating them as ordinary society women. Therefore they began to smile among themselves, and though they very eagerly listened to Kāññēa talk in that way, they were surprised. Then Kāññēa began to instruct them: “My dear friends, you must know that it is now the dead of night, and the forest is very dangerous. At this time all the ferocious jungle Animals—the tigers, bears, jackals and wolves—are prowling in the forest. Therefore it is very dangerous for you. You cannot select a secure place now. Everywhere you go you will find that all these animals are loitering to find their prey. I think, therefore, that you are taking a great risk in coming here in the dead of night. Please turn back immediately, without delay.”

When He saw that they continued to smile, He said, “I very much appreciate your bodily features. All of you have nice, very thin waists.” All of the *gopés* there were exquisitely beautiful. They are described by the word *sumadhyamā*; the standard of beauty of a woman is said to be *sumadhyamā* when the middle portion of the body is slender. Kāññēa wanted to impress on them that they were not old enough to take care of themselves. Actually, they required protection. It was not very wise for them to come in the dead of night to Kāññēa. Kāññēa also indicated that He was young and that they were young girls. “It does not look very well for young girls and boys to remain together in the dead of night.” After hearing this advice, the *gopés* did not seem very happy; therefore Kāññēa began to stress the point in a different way.

“My dear friends, I can understand that you have left your homes without the permission of your guardians; therefore I think your mothers, your fathers, your elder brothers and even your sons, and what to speak of your husbands, must be very anxious to find you. As long as you are here, they must be searching in different places, and their minds must be very agitated. So don’t tarry. Please go back and make them peaceful.”

When the *gopés* appeared to be a little bit disturbed and angry from hearing the free advice of Kāññēa, they diverted their attention to looking at the beauty of the forest. At that time the whole forest was illuminated by the bright shining of the moon, and the air was blowing very silently over the blooming flowers, and the green leaves of the trees were moving in the breeze. Kāññēa took the opportunity of their looking at the forest to advise them. “I think you

have come out to see the beautiful Våndāvana forest on this night,” He said, “but you must now be satisfied. So return to your homes without delay. I understand that you are all very chaste women, so now that you have seen the beautiful atmosphere of the Våndāvana forests, please return home and engage in the faithful service of your respective husbands. Some of you must have babies by this time, although you are very young. You must have left your small babies at home, and they must be crying. Please immediately go back home and just feed them with your breast milk. I can also understand that you have very great affection for me, and out of that transcendental affection you have come here, hearing my playing on the flute. Your feelings of love and affection for Me are very appropriate because I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All living creatures are My parts and parcels, and naturally they are affectionate to Me. So this affection for Me is very welcome, and I congratulate you for this. Now you can go back to your homes. Another thing I must explain to you is that for a chaste woman, service to the husband without duplicity is the best religious principle. A woman should be not only faithful and chaste to the husband but affectionate to the friends of her husband, obedient to the father and mother of the husband, and affectionate to the younger brothers of the husband. And most importantly, the woman must take care of the children.”

In this way, Kāññā explained the duty of a woman. He also stressed the point of serving the husband: “Even if he is not of very good character, or even if he is not very rich or fortunate, or even if he is old or invalid on account of continued diseases, whatever her husband’s condition, a woman should not divorce her husband if she actually desires to be elevated to the higher planetary systems after leaving this body. Besides that, it is considered abominable in society if a woman is unfaithful and goes searching for another man. Such habits will deter a woman from being elevated to the heavenly planets, and the results of such habits are very degrading. A married woman should not search for a paramour, for this is not sanctioned by the Vedic principles of life. If you think that you are very much attached to me and you want My association, I advise you not to personally try to enjoy Me. It is better for you to go home, simply talk about me and think of me, and by this process of constantly remembering me and chanting my names you will surely be elevated to the spiritual platform. There is no need to stand near me. Please go back home.”

The instruction given herein by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to the *gopés* was not at all sarcastic. Such instructions should be taken very seriously by all honest women. The chastity of women is specifically stressed herein by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore this principle should be followed by any serious woman who wants to be elevated to a higher status of life. Kāññā is the center of all affection for all living creatures. When this affection is developed for Kāññā, then one surpasses and transcends all Vedic injunctions. This was possible for the *gopés* because they saw Kāññā face to face. This is not possible for any women in the conditioned state. Unfortunately, sometimes a rascal, following the philosophy of monism, or oneness, very irresponsibly takes advantage of this *Rāhāsā-lélā* to imitate the behavior of Kāññā with the *gopés*, entice many innocent women and mislead them in the name of spiritual realization. As a warning, Lord Kāññā has herein hinted that what was possible for the *gopés* is not possible for ordinary women. Although a woman can actually be elevated by advanced Kāññā consciousness, she should not be enticed by an imposter who says that he is Kāññā. She should concentrate her devotional activities in chanting and meditating upon Kāññā, as is advised herein. One should not follow the men called *sahajiyā*, the so-called devotees who take everything very lightly.

When Kāññēa spoke in such a discouraging way to the *gopēs*, they became very sad, for they thought that their desire to enjoy the *Rāhāsā* dance with Kāññēa would be frustrated. Thus they became full of anxiety. Out of great sadness, the *gopēs* began to breathe very heavily. Instead of looking at Kāññēa face to face, they bowed their heads and looked to the ground, and they began to draw various types of curved lines on the ground with their toes. They were shedding heavy tears, and their cosmetic decorations were being washed from their faces. The water from their eyes mixed with the *kuikuma* on their breasts and fell to the ground. They could not say anything to Kāññēa but simply stood there silently. By their silence they expressed that their hearts were grievously wounded. The *gopēs* were not ordinary women. In essence they were on an equal level with Kāññēa. They are His eternal associates. As it is confirmed in the *Brahma-saṅhitā*, they are expansions of the pleasure potency of Kāññēa, and as His potency they are no different from Him. Although they were depressed by the words of Kāññēa, they did not like to use harsh words against Him. Yet they wanted to rebuke Kāññēa for His unkind words, and therefore they began to speak in faltering voices. They did not like to use harsh words against Kāññēa because He was their dear most, their heart and soul. The *gopēs* had only Kāññēa within their hearts. They were completely surrendered and dedicated souls. Naturally, when they heard such unkind words, they tried to reply, but in the attempt torrents of tears fell from their eyes. Finally they managed to speak.

“Kāññēa,” they said, “You are very cruel! You should not talk like that. We are full-fledged surrendered souls. Please accept us, and don’t talk in that cruel way. Of course, you are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and you can do whatever You like, but it is not worthy of Your position to treat us in such a cruel way. We have come to you, leaving everything behind, just to take shelter of your lotus feet. We know that you are completely independent and can do whatever you like, but we request You, don’t reject us. We are your devotees. You should accept us as Lord Nārāyaṇa accepts His devotees. There are many devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa who worship Him for salvation, and He awards them salvation. Similarly, how can you reject us when we have no other shelter than your lotus feet?”

“O dear Kāññēa,” they continued, “You are the supreme instructor. There is no doubt about it. Your instructions to women to be faithful to their husbands and merciful to their children, to take care of household affairs and to be obedient to the elder members of the family, are surely just according to the tenets of the *sāstras*. But we know that one may perfectly observe all these instructions of the *sāstras* by keeping oneself under the protection of Your lotus feet. Our husbands, friends, family members and children are all dear and pleasing to us only because of your presence, for you are the Super soul of all living creatures. Without Your presence, one is worthless. When you leave the body, the body immediately dies, and according to the injunction of the *sāstras*, a dead body must immediately be thrown into a river or burned. Therefore, ultimately you are the dear most personality in this world. By placing our faith and love in your personality, we are assured of never being bereft of husband, friends, sons or daughters. If a woman accepts You as the supreme husband, then she will never be bereft of her husband, as in the bodily concept of life. If we accept You as our ultimate husband, then there is no question of being separated, divorced or widowed. You are the eternal husband, eternal son, eternal friend and eternal master, and one who enters into a relationship with you is eternally happy. Since you are the teacher of all religious principles, your lotus feet have to be worshiped first. Accordingly, the *sāstras* state, *ācārya-upāsana*: the worship of your lotus feet is the first principle. Besides that, as stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, you are the only enjoyer, you are the only proprietor, and you are the only friend. As such, we have come to you; leaving aside all so-called friends, society and love,

and now you have become our enjoyer. Let us be everlastingly enjoyed by you. Be our proprietor, for that is your natural claim, and be our supreme friend, for you are Naturally so. Let us thus embrace you as the supreme beloved.”

Then the *gopés* told lotus-eyed Kāññā, “Please do not discourage our long cherished desires to have you as our husband. Any intelligent man who cares for his own self-interest reposes all his loving spirit in you. Persons who are simply misled by the external energy, who want to be satisfied by false concepts, try to enjoy themselves apart from you. The so-called Husband, friend, son, daughter, father and mother are all simply sources of material misery. No one is made happy in this material world by having a so-called father, mother, husband, son, daughter and friend. Although the father and mother are expected to protect the children, There are many children who are suffering for want of food and shelter. There are many good physicians, but when a patient dies, no physician can revive him. There are many means of protection, but when one is doomed, none of the protective measures can help, and without your protection the so-called sources of protection simply become sources of continued distress. We therefore appeal to you, dear Lord of all lords; please do not kill our long-cherished desires to have you as our supreme husband.

“Dear Kāññā, as women, we are certainly satisfied when our hearts are engaged in the activities of family affairs, but our hearts have already been stolen by you. We can no longer engage them in family affairs. Besides that, although you have repeatedly asked us to return home, and that is a very appropriate instruction, unfortunately we have been stunned here. Our legs have no power to move a step from your lotus feet. Therefore, if even at Your request we return home, what shall we do there? We have lost all our ability to act without you. Instead of engaging our hearts in family affairs as women, we have now developed a Different type of lust which is continually blazing in our hearts. Now we request You, dear Kāññā, to extinguish that fire with Your beautiful smile and the transcendental vibration emanating from Your lips. If you do not agree to do us this favor, we shall certainly be burned in the fire of separation. In that condition, we shall simply think of You and Your Beautiful features and give up our bodies immediately. In that way we think it will be possible for us to reside at your lotus feet in the next life. Dear Kāññā, if you say that if we go home our respective husbands will satisfy the lusty flame of our desire, we can only say that that is no longer possible. You have given us a chance to be enjoyed by you in the Forest and have touched our breasts once in the past, which we accepted as a blessing, as did the goddesses of fortune, who are enjoyed in the Vaikuëhalokas by You. Since we have tasted this transcendental enjoyment, we are no longer interested in going to anyone but you for the satisfaction of our lust. Dear Kāññā, the lotus feet of the goddess of fortune are always worshiped by the demigods. Although she is always resting on your chest in the Vaikuëha planets, she underwent great austerity and penance to have some shelter at Your lotus feet, which are always covered by *tulasé* leaves. Your lotus feet are the proper shelter of your servitors, and the goddess of fortune, instead of abiding on your chest, comes down and worships your lotus feet. We have now placed ourselves under the dust of Your feet. Please do not reject us, for we are fully surrendered souls.

“Dear Kāññā, You are known as Hari. You destroy all the miseries of all living entities, specifically of those who have left their homes and family attachment and have completely taken to you. We have left our homes with the hope that we shall completely devote and dedicate our lives to your service. We are simply begging to be engaged as your servants. We do not wish to ask you to accept us as your wives. Simply accept us as your maidservants.

Since you are the Supreme Personality of Godhead and like to enjoy the *parakéya-rasa* and are famous as a transcendental woman hunter, we have come to satisfy your transcendental desires. We are also after our own satisfaction, for simply by looking at your smiling face we have become very lusty. We have come before you decorated with all ornaments and dress, but until you embrace us, all our clothes and beautiful features remain incomplete. You are the Supreme Person, and if you complete our dressing attempt as the *puruṇa-bhūṇaḍa*, or the Male ornament, then all our desires and bodily decorations are complete. “Dear Kāṇḍa, we have simply been captivated by seeing you with *tilaka* and with earrings and by seeing your beautiful face covered with Scattered hair and bearing your extraordinary smile. Not only that, but we are also attracted by your arms, which always give assurance to the surrendered souls. And although we are also attracted by your chest, which is always embraced by the goddess of fortune, we do not wish to take her position. We shall simply be satisfied by being your maidservants. If you accuse us, however, of encouraging prostitution, then we can only ask, where is that woman within these three worlds who is not captivated by Your beauty and the rhythmic songs vibrated by Your transcendental flute? Within these three worlds there is no distinction between men and women in relation to You because both men and women belong to the marginal potency, or *prakāṭi*. No one is actually the enjoyer, or the male; everyone is meant to be enjoyed by you. There is no woman within these three worlds who cannot but deviate from her path of chastity once she is attracted to you, because Your beauty is so sublime that not only men and women but also cows, birds, beasts and even trees, fruits and flowers—everyone and everything—become enchanted, and what to speak of ourselves? It is, however, definitely decided that as Lord Viṇḍu is always protecting the demigods from the onslaught of demons, so you have also advented in Vāṇḍavana just to give the residents protection from all kinds of distress. O dear friend of the distressed, kindly place your hand on our burning breasts as well as on our heads, because we have surrendered unto you as your eternal maidservants. If you think, however, that Your lotus like palms might be burned to ashes if placed on our burning breasts, let us assure You that Your palms will feel pleasure instead of pain, as the lotus flower, although very delicate and soft, enjoys the scorching heat of the sun.”

Upon hearing the anxious plea of the *gopés*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead smiled, and being very kind to the *gopés*, the Lord, although self-sufficient, began to embrace them and kiss them as they desired. When Kāṇḍa, smiling, looked at the faces of the *gopés*, the beauty of their faces became a hundred times enhanced. When He was enjoying them in their midst, He appeared just like the full moon surrounded by millions of shining stars. Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead, surrounded by hundreds of *gopés* and decorated with a flower garland of many colors, began to wander within the Vāṇḍavana forest, sometimes singing to Himself and sometimes singing with the *gopés*. In this way the Lord and the *gopés* reached the cool, sandy bank of the Yamunā, where there were lilies and lotus flowers. In such a transcendental atmosphere, the *gopés* and Kāṇḍa began to enjoy one another. While they were walking on the bank of the Yamunā, Kāṇḍa would sometimes put His arms around a *gopé's* head, breast or waist. Pinching one another and joking and looking at one another, they enjoyed. When Kāṇḍa touched the bodies of the *gopés*, their lust to embrace Him increased. They all enjoyed these pastimes. Thus the *gopés* were blessed with all mercy by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for they enjoyed His company without a tinge of mundane sex life.

The *gopés*, however, soon began to feel very proud, thinking themselves to be the most fortunate women in the universe due to being favored by the company of Kāṇḍa. Lord Kāṇḍa, who is known as Keshava, could immediately understand their pride caused by their great

fortune of enjoying Him personally, and in order to show them His causeless mercy and to curb their false pride, He immediately disappeared from the scene, exhibiting His opulence of renunciation. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is always full with six kinds of opulence's, and this is an instance of the opulence of renunciation. This renunciation confirms Kāñëa's total nonattachment. He is always self-sufficient and is not dependent on anything. This is the platform on which His transcendental pastimes are enacted his *Rāhäsä* Lila. Described...













